

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

The California Highway Patrol is a law enforcement and traffic safety agency reporting to Business, Transportation and Housing Agency Secretary Maria Contreras-Sweet and Governor Gray Davis.



CONTACT: OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
(916) 657-7202
(916) 657-8639 - FAX

January 11, 2002

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

02-01

GOVERNOR INCREASES CHP BUDGET TO ENSURE STATE SECURITY

SACRAMENTO -- Governor Davis in his proposed 2002-2003 budget has earmarked additional funds for more officers and equipment to enable the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to provide security for California's highways and infrastructure.

The budget proposes funding for:

- Five additional helicopters to augment the CHP's nine-helicopter fleet.**
- 316 additional positions, including flight crews for the new helicopters and 150 officers to staff the CHP's 16 commercial vehicle inspection stations 24 hours a day, seven days a week.**
- \$2.3 million for Chem-Bio Protective Equipment Kits and Nerve Agent Antidote Kits for CHP officers.**

"With these budget proposals, Gov. Davis is giving the CHP the officers and equipment we need to keep California as safe as possible from terrorism," said CHP Commissioner D. O. "Spike" Helmick.

"The CHP is operating at the staffing level similar to what we had in the early 1970s," Helmick said. "At the same time, we've been assigned many new responsibilities, including protection of state officials, state buildings and the infrastructure."

The additional officers and equipment will have impact in these areas:

MORE

•At the commercial inspection facilities, the CHP will have the staff to place added emphasis on inspections of trucks carrying hazardous and radioactive materials, biological agents and flammable and combustible fuels. All drivers will be scrutinized for proper licenses and paperwork. Commercial officers have been working 12-hour shifts since Sept. 11. to keep the inspection facilities open around the clock.

•Additional helicopters are needed to meet the greatly expanded duties they have been assigned following the terrorist attacks. Helicopters now are making regular overflights of bridges, dams, oil refineries, the power grid, nuclear power plants and other possible terrorist targets. Four of the new helicopters will be assigned to the cities of Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego and Sacramento. The fifth will be used to streamline maintenance of the helicopter fleet.

•The threat of biological and chemical agents being used in terrorist attacks has meant a significantly expanded role for the CHP in protecting state facilities and officials. The new equipment will provide biological filters, coveralls, rubber gloves and other equipment to protect officers against biological attacks and a nerve agent antidote to counteract a chemical attack. Chemical agent protective masks are another piece of requested equipment.

#

Flex your power! Do ALL YOU CAN TO CONSERVE